

Cirencester Urban District
Council.

ANNUAL REPORT
— OF THE —
Medical Officer of Health.

1937.

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ANNUAL REPORT of the Medical Officer of Health for 1937.

DR. H. F. W. ADAMS.

This report, my seventeenth, is similar to that for 1936, an ordinary report.

The health of the district has been good, except for an unfortunate outbreak of food poisoning in the spring.

There is an abnormally low incidence of infectious diseases, and only 4 new cases of tuberculosis were notified.

70 new houses were built and more are to be added.

The number of sanitary inspections, etc., continues to grow, and the routine sanitary work in the district is very thoroughly done.

GENERAL STATISTICS.

Area (acres)	...	...	...	...	...	5,844
Population (Census 1931)	...	...	...	...	...	7,203
and estimated 1936	...	...	...	...	...	7,921
ditto 1937	...	...	...	...	...	7,988
Number of houses inhabited (Census 1931)...						1,886
				(end of 1936)	...	2,342
				(end of 1937)	...	2,361
Rateable Value	...	...	...	...	...	£55,539
Sum represented by a penny rate	...	...	...	...	...	£220

EXTRACTS FROM VITAL STATISTICS OF THE YEAR.

LIVE BIRTHS		M.	F.	Total
Legitimate	...	37	49	86
Illegitimate	...	1	1	2
Birth Rate (R.G.) 11.				

STILL BIRTHS

Legitimate	...	1	1	2
Illegitimate	...	—	—	—
Rate per 1,000 total (live and still) births, 11.2				

DEATHS	...	...	48	65	113
Death Rate (R.G.) 14.1					

Number of Women dying in, or in				
consequence of childbirth...from Sepsis				...
from other causes				Nil

Deaths of Infants under one year of age per 1,000 births:—	
Legitimate, 46.3:	Illegitimate, 500; Total, 56.

Deaths from Measles (all ages)	...	1 (male)
„ „ Whooping Cough (all ages)		Nil
„ „ Diarrhœa (under 2 years of age)		1 (female)

Apart from two Bacon Factories, one Flour Mill and one Brewery, the district is mainly agricultural.

CAUSES OF DEATH IN 1937.

DISEASE.	Males.	Females.
Measles	1	...
Influenza	2	...
Cancer	10	5
Cerebral Hæmorrhage	4	9
Heart Disease	10	18
Aneurysm	..	1
Other Circulatory Diseases	1	3
Bronchitis	3	...
Pneumonia	1	2
Other Respiratory Diseases	1	1
Peptic Ulcer	3	...
Diarrhœa	...	1
Other Digestive Diseases	...	1
Nephritis	...	5
Congenital Causes, etc.	...	4
Senility	3	8
Other violence	7	1
Other defined Causes	2	6
All causes	48	65

As will be seen by the foregoing figures, statistics and tables no excessive or unusual mortality occurred in 1937.

CANCER caused 15 deaths, a slight decrease.

INFLUENZA caused 2 deaths in 1937.

DISEASES OF THE CIRCULATORY SYSTEM caused 46 deaths out of a total of 113 (the usual high percentage).

The age incidence is again somewhat extraordinary.

9 deaths occurred between the ages of 65 and 70

18	"	"	"	"	70 and 75
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19	"	"	"	"	75 and 80
----	---	---	---	---	-----------

23	"	"	"	"	80 and 85
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6	"	"	"	"	85 and 90
---	---	---	---	---	-----------

and 7 deaths occurred at 90 years or over, i.e. 82 deaths out of 113 occurring over the age of 65.

So it will be seen that the death rate, 14.1, which appears somewhat high, being over that for England and Wales, 12.4, is in reality a very excellent one.

BIRTH RATE :—11, is low, both in comparison with the figure for England and Wales which is 14.9, and the corresponding figure for 1936, viz. 13.2.

INFANT MORTALITY :—56 is slightly below that for England and Wales, 58, but is, all things being considered, somewhat high.

It is caused by the deaths of 5 children under one year. (The illegitimate figure appears alarming, 500. It is, however, caused by one death out of 2 illegitimate births).

STILL BIRTHS :—2 were reported, both legitimate.

HOSPITALS AND OTHER INSTITUTIONS AVAILABLE FOR THE DISTRICT.

These are identical with the conditions prevailing last year. The improved and enlarged Memorial Hospital continues to do excellent work.

Fever, Cirencester Joint Hospital 14 beds (about).

There are no hospitals in the district for Tuberculosis, Maternity Cases or Smallpox.

One motor ambulance is provided for non-infectious and accident cases, and a motor ambulance for fever cases.

The out-station for the treatment of defective school children is now being widely used.

A Tuberculosis clinic is held once a week at the Memorial Hospital.

There is also an Infant Welfare Centre in operation, which continues to do good work ; and an Eye Clinic.

Cases of Tuberculosis requiring hospital treatment are sent to Standish Sanatorium.

Bacteriological and Analytical work is under the control of the County Council.

PUBLIC HEALTH STAFF.

This consists of a full-time Medical Officer of Health and a full-time Sanitary Inspector (Mr. Jenkinson, who has now succeeded Mr. Armstrong in July, 1937), and a full-time Building Surveyor.

NURSING.

Four nurses are employed in the area ; two Midwives and two ordinary. One Midwife and one general nurse are under the control of the Hospital Committee.

MATERNAL MORTALITY.

This is under the administration of the County Council.

LEGISLATION IN FORCE.

This is unchanged.

Public Health Act Amendment Act, 1927.

Sections 17, 19, 20, 22, 23, 25, 26, 27, 29.

Parts 2, 3, other than Section 50, 4, 5.

Public Health Act 1925.

Parts 2, 3, 4, also Sections 21 and 22.

The New Milk & Dairies Orders.

SCHOOLS.

These remain in good sanitary condition. Each school has a water supply. (One is somewhat overcrowded).

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF

THE DISTRICT.

WATER SUPPLY.

A new scheme of water supply was commenced during the year. Two new boreholes were sunk at Baunton and have a yield of 6,000,000 gals. each, also the construction of a new reservoir on the Gloucester Road, capable of holding 250,000 gals. was commenced.

Periodic samples of the existing supply have proved satisfactory.

Ten samples of private wells were taken and 6 of these were found to be polluted.

101 new connections have been made on the public supply.

SEWERAGE AND DRAINAGE.

Several extensions have been made on the sewers owing to the continued development in Housing Estates.

The need for a sewerage system in Stratton in view of the development of this area as a residential district is becoming more imperative, and a new scheme is now under consideration by the Council.

All drainage work is inspected.

RIVERS AND STREAMS.

Frequent inspections are made of the streams in the district to prevent pollution. No serious pollution occurred during the year.

PUBLIC CLEANSING.

No changes have occurred in the method of collection and disposal of refuse during the year.

SANITARY INSPECTION OF THE AREA.

NUMBERS INSPECTED OF EACH OF THE
FOLLOWING :

	No on Register.	No. Inspected.	Total No. of Inspections.
(a) Common Lodging Houses	1	1	2
(b) Slaughter Houses ...	11	11	647
(c) Bakehouses	12	12	17
(d) Dairies, Cowsheds, Milk-shops	16	16	37
(e) Workshops	22	22	33
(f) Outworkers' Residences	1	1	1

GENERAL.

(a) Number of complaints received	117
(b) Number of nuisances reported to District Council—	
(1) Total	116
(2) Swine	1
(c) Total number of nuisances abated	96
(d) Total number of preliminary notices served	48
(e) Total number of Statutory notices served	Nil
(f) Total number of summonses taken out	Nil
(g) Total number of convictions	Nil
(h) Number of houses disinfected	15

SWIMMING BATH.

This continues to be very popular and an asset to the town. It is used twice a week by the schools, including 3 private schools and the Grammar School.

To ensure pure water a filtration and chlorination plant has been installed.

RATS & MICE (DESTRUCTION) ACT.

Work under this Act is delegated to the Urban District Council by the County Council.

Advice is given where required and in certain cases rat poison (of a type harmless to domestic animals) is given out.

Special attention has been paid where possible to making premises rat proof, and this has entailed a considerable amount of work.

ERADICATION OF BED BUGS.

Five private houses were found to be infested with bed bugs and these were disinfected with Cimex by the Council.

No Council Houses were found to be infested.

FACTORIES, WORKSHOPS & WORKPLACES.

64 visits of inspection have been made in connection with the above, and the following nuisances found and abated.

NUISANCES UNDER PUBLIC HEALTH ACTS.

	Found.	Remedied.
Want of cleanliness	2	2
Want of ventilation	1	1
Overcrowding	—	—
Want of drainage of floors ...	—	—
Other nuisances	2	2
	<u>5</u>	<u>5</u>

HOUSING.

1. NEW HOUSES ERECTED DURING THE YEAR.

(a) Total [including numbers given separately under (b)]	70
(b) With State Assistance under the Housing Acts—	
(1) By the Local Authority	44
(2) By other bodies or persons	Nil
(c) Proposed under Housing Acts	29

2. INSPECTION.

(1) Total number of dwelling-houses inspected for housing defects [under Public Health or Housing Acts]	131
Number of inspections made	512
(2) Number of dwelling-houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation	3
(3) Number of dwelling-houses [exclusive of those referred to under the preceding sub-head] found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation	121

3.	REMEDY OF DEFECTS DURING THE YEAR WITHOUT SERVICE OF FORMAL NOTICES.	
	Number of defective dwelling-houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their Officers...	20
4.	ACTION UNDER STATUTORY POWERS.	
	(1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring repairs ...	24
	(2) Number of dwelling-houses which were rendered fit after service of formal notices— ...	22
	Number of dwelling-houses demolished in pursuance of demolition orders ...	1
5.	HOUSING ACT 1936.—OVERCROWDING.	
	(1) Number of dwelling-houses overcrowded at the end of the year ...	27
	(2) Number of families dwelling therein ...	27
	(3) Number of persons dwelling therein ...	201
	Number of cases of overcrowding relieved during the year ...	9

COUNCIL HOUSES.

The demand for Council Houses is still as great as ever.

During the past year 49 Council houses were erected at Sperrington, and 2 at the Bowling Green, while 2 old houses in the Canal Wharf were closed for human habitation, making a total of 258 in occupation. In addition 26 houses at Siddington Road and 3 houses in Querns Road were in course of erection, and in a further attempt to meet the housing shortage the Council acquired land at Chesterton for the erection of a further 150 houses.

In October the Council appointed a general House Repairer to carry out minor repairs and assist in maintaining the property. This has proved to be a wise step and has resulted in a saving in time in executing urgent repairs also an economy.

INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD.

DAIRIES, COWSHEDS AND MILKSHOPS.

These continue to receive attention. 37 visits were made to inspect the 16 premises recorded in the register.

There is one pasteurising plant in the district and this is in a satisfactory condition.

MEAT AND FOODS.

There are 2 bacon factories and 7 private slaughterhouses within the district.

270 visits have been made to slaughterhouses (excluding the bacon factories) and to butchers' shops.

CARCASSES INSPECTED AND CONDEMNED.

	Cattle	Calves	Sheep	Pigs
Number inspected	318	67	552	320
All diseases except Tuberculosis :—				
Whole carcasses condemned ...	2	—	4	1
Carcasses of which some part or organ was condemned ...	8	—	6	12
Percentage of the number inspected affected with disease other than Tuberculosis ...	3.18	—	1.8	4.06
Tuberculosis only :—				
Whole carcasses condemned ...	4	—	—	1
Carcasses of which some part or organ was condemned ...	11	—	—	22
Percentage of the number inspected affected with Tuberculosis	4.72	—	—	7.42

377 visits have been made to the 2 bacon factories and the following pigs inspected :

AT THE 2 BACON FACTORIES.

Number of pigs killed	...	...	...	32,008
Number inspected	...	...	...	4,920
All diseases except T.B.—				
Whole carcasses condemned	...	...	...	38
Carcasses of which some part or organ was	...	...	...	...
condemned	...	...	...	4,039
Percentage of the number inspected	...	...	...	...
affected with disease other than T.B.	...	...	...	83.3
Tuberculoses only :				
Whole carcasses condemned	...	...	...	52
Carcasses of which some part or organ	...	...	...	...
was condemned	...	...	...	1,736
Percentage of the number inspected	...	...	...	...
affected with Tuberculosis	...	...	...	36.37

NOTE.—In explaining the high percentage at the Bacon Factories, regard should be had to the fact that the carcasses inspected by the inspector of the Local Authority are chiefly those put on one side for post-mortem inspection and any carcase with which the slightest suspicion or doubt exists.

Total weight of meat condemned at private slaughter-houses and bacon factories :—

tons	cwts.	qrs.	lbs.
41	0	4	11

23 visits have also been made to the weekly produce market, which was found to be satisfactory.

MEAT DESTROYED.

PIGS.	Carcasses and offal	...	92
	Plucks	...	4,260
	Heads	...	1,549
BEASTS.	Carcasses and offal	...	6
	Part carcasses	...	1
	Heads	...	5
	Lungs and livers	...	11

SHEEP.	Carcases and offal	...	4
	Part carcass	...	1
	Plucks	...	5

Also 3 pieces of Imported beef weighing 68 lbs. and one piece of English beef weighing 290 lbs. were condemned from butchers' shops.

PREVALENCE AND CONTROL OVER INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

As has been already stated 1937 was remarkably free from infectious disease.

In all 13 cases were notified.

1 case of Scarlet Fever: a boy of 11, admitted to hospital.

3 cases of Diphtheria: a man of 60, a woman of 50, and a young woman of 21 (a very doubtful case, with no clinical symptoms). These three cases were all treated in hospital.

There were also 8 cases of Pneumonia and one case of Erysipelas, which call for no special comment. (Pneumonia caused 3 deaths.)

NOTIFIABLE DISEASES DURING THE YEAR.

DISEASE.	Total Cases Notified	Cases admitted to Hospital	Total Deaths
Small Pox	—	—	—
Scarlet Fever	1	1	—
Diphtheria	3	2	—
Enteric Fever (including Paratyphoid)	—	—	—
Puerperal Fever	—	—	—
Puerperal Pyrexia	—	—	—
Pneumonia	8	3	3
Other diseases generally noti- fiable—Erysipelas	1	—	—
Other diseases notifiable locally	—	—	—

TUBERCULOSIS.

Age Periods	NEW CASES.				DEATHS.			
	Pulmonary		Non-Pulmonary		Pulmonary		Non-Pulmonary	
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
10	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
15	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
20	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
25	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
35	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
45	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
55	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
65 and upwards	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Totals ...	3	1	0	0	0	0	0	0

No deaths from Tuberculosis occurred in 1937.

Appended is a special report on the Epidemic of food poisoning (already referred to on page 1).

FOOD POISONING.

On 29th May, 1937, Saturday evening, I received a report that food poisoning was suspected in the Urban Area, due as far as could be ascertained to the consumption of cooked meats. Early on Sunday morning I received a message from one of the Medical Practitioners in the Rural Area, that there did appear to be an outbreak of food poisoning at Quenington. These cases I investigated and my Urban Sanitary Inspector visited the cases in his district. It was obvious that the symptoms were food poisoning, and that the common food consumed was cooked meats purchased from a local firm,

On Monday, May 31st, I communicated the facts as then known to the Ministry of Health, visited the factory, stopped all supplies of cooked meats, withdrew all stocks from their shops, and forwarded certain samples to the Clinical Research Association Ltd. My Sanitary Inspector visited every suspected case with the object of obtaining samples of the meat in question. He did receive one: this was also forwarded for examination. Copies of the reports are attached.

During this investigation various blood specimens, and specimens of faeces from the patients and contacts were examined and in most cases found to contain the Gaertner bacilli.

A thorough investigation was made at the factory, of their methods, etc., and shop premises, and all possible contamination and causes traced, but no conclusive report could be made.

On two occasions in June, Dr. Conybeare of the Ministry of Health visited Cirencester and thoroughly investigated the conditions at the factory, taking various samples. In one of these, brine from the tank where bath chaps were cured, the gaertner bacilli was definitely traced, and it was ascertained and proved that the method employed at the factory would allow the cooked meats to become contaminated at some stage or another.

Reports were received of patients with similar symptoms from Bristol, Bibury, Rodmarton, Chippenham, Quenington, Sapperton, Cheltenham and Dursley: and in every case meat was procured from this firm's premises.

In Cirencester Urban Area some 67 families were visited where 138 people were ill with these symptoms, there being three deaths.

On June 14th the factory restarted making cooked meats, and samples were forwarded to Dr. Scott, Ministry of Health, all of which proved negative. After certain alterations in methods, etc., had been approved, the firm restarted this branch of their business.

[COPY]

The CLINICAL RESEARCH ASSOCIATION, Ltd.
4/6/37.

The specimen—piece of pressed beef—marked A (piece of the beef withdrawn from sale on Saturday) received here on 31/5/37 has been duly examined and I have been instructed to forward the following report:—

LABORATORY REPORT No. 21908.

The specimen of pressed beef is usual in appearance except that there is a slight discolouration in one or two places. There is no malodour and the sample was in quite a good marketable condition when received at the laboratory.

Stained preparations made direct from the sample show only a few micrococci.

“The cultures made direct from the sample and from portions seeded into sterile broth, McConkey broth and a brilliant green medium show only colonies of a short *Streptococcus* of the *salivarius* or *faecalis* type. Coliform bacilli of any kind are not found and no other bacteria which might account for the food-poisoning symptoms are detected.”

The specimen—piece of tinned tongue—marked B (this tin of tongue was opened on Monday morning and exposed for sale).

LABORATORY REPORT No. 21909.

The specimen of tongue is of first class marketable appearance and has no suspicion of any offensive odour.

The smear preparations made direct from it show only a very occasional micrococcus.

The cultures made direct from the samples show a few scattered colonies of a *Staphylococcus epidermidis albus* (quite non-haemolytic).

The cultures made from the emulsions broth, McConkey, etc., contain small numbers of *B. Coli* and non-lactose fermenting bacilli. Colonies of the latter have similar characters to the organism particularly described in Report 21910.

[COPY]

The CLINICAL RESEARCH ASSOCIATION Ltd.

4/6/37.

The sample of pressed beef marked C (remains found at a house in the Urban Area, where a fatal case occurred, purchased on Saturday, collected on Monday) received here on 31/5/37, has been duly examined, and I have been instructed to forward the following:—

LABORATORY REPORT No. 21910.

The specimen consists of a few dry scraps of pressed beef and showing no obvious malodour.

Stained preparations made direct from the specimen show numerous coliform bacilli and micrococci.

The McConkey agar and blood-agar plates made direct from the sample show colonies of a *B. coli*, a short *Streptococcus* similar to that found in 21908, an occasional colony of a *Staphylococcus Pyogenes Aureus* and at

least two varieties of non-lactose fermenting bacilli. One of these appears to be a nondescript of no particular significance, but the other is a motile, Gram-negative coliform organism showing the cultural characters common to the *Salmonella* paratyphoid-suipestifer group. Serological tests have been made with three different sera—(1) a specific Aerttrycke (2) a polyvalent *Salmonella* and (3) a "Wellcome" *B. enteritidis* (Gaertner). There is no reaction with 1 but 2 and 3 give good reactions and it is concluded that this organism is a *B. suipestifer* probably of the enteritidis type syn. *B. enteritidis* Gaertner and capable of accounting for the symptoms described.

The specimen—piece of pressed beef—marked D (made from English beef, taken from the mould at the factory).

The specimen of pressed beef is of good appearance and shows no malodour on reaching the laboratory.

Stained preparations made direct show only a few bacilli chiefly coliform in type.

The cultures made direct from the sample show only an occasional *B. coli*. The cultures made from broth, and McConkey broth previously seeded with the sample and incubated at 37 C for 24 hours yield growths of *B. coli*, a few short streptococci and considerable numbers of non-lactose fermenting bacilli. One of these is exactly similar to the organism isolated from 21910 and which we have provisionally identified as a *Salmonella enteritidis* Gaertner.

